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Historical Facts

An Outline of the Salient Events in the
History of Cambridge, Mass., for
the Boys and the Girls of
Our Beloved City

By
A Graduate of the Cambridge High School



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THIS booklet giving an outline of the History of Cambridge is respectfully dedicated to a gentleman whose exemplary life is modelled on that of the Great Teacher, and whose ability as an educator is recognized by all—Michael E. Fitzgerald, Superintendent of Schools, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U. S. A.

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PREFACE.

During the past year the writer of this pamphlet had the pleasure of listening to a number of short papers on the history of Cambridge. She was so impressed by the many facts brought to her attention on that occasion that she made up her mind to write, in question and answer form, a brief outline of the history of Cambridge, so that every pupil in our schools might have an opportunity to become acquainted with the growth and development of our city.

It is an undoubted fact that a knowledge of the history of our birthplace inspires us with a greater love for it. Nay, more; it helps us to become better citizens of this great nation.

It is very true that the children in our schools study the history of the United States. That is perfectly proper. In fact it is very necessary. But how few of them are acquainted with the early history of their native city? How many of them could tell when the town or city was incorporated, or what part the citizens of that town or city took in the Revolutionary War? Does it not seem as if local history were somewhat neglected in our schools?

The main facts contained in this pamphlet are taken from Paige's "History of Cambridge," and from essays by John Fiske, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William E. Russell, Frank A. Hill, etc.

If this pamphlet helps to make the children of Cambridge more interested in the welfare and prosperity of their native city, and if it helps them to become better citizens of our glorious republic, the author will feel well repaid.

There are some things to be resolved upon. We should keep our past. The history of this ground, the annals of the city, are to be remembered and taught, so that they may descend from generation to generation.—Rev. Alexander McKenzie.

THE CAMBRIDGE HYMN

*Fair on the sight
Dawneth a light,
Heralding ages that yet are to be
When every man,
Earnest in plan,
Steadfast for duty, life's purpose shall see.
Noble the city, noble the state,
When all her children, humble or great,
Seek to repay
Each in his way,
Blessings unnumbered she lavishes free.*

*Heirs of the past,
We will hold fast,
All of the lessons she teaches today;
Giving in turn,
Thus may we learn
Calls of the future with joy to obey.
City of freedom, city of peace,
May all our lives thy honor increase;
Pledge we in truth
Now in our youth,
Gladly we serve thee as years pass away.*

—EMMA E. MAREAN.

For it is neither wealth, nor power, nor cunning, nor craft, that exalts a nation, but righteousness and the fear of the Lord.—From John Fiske's Oration in Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, June 2, 1896.

HISTORICAL FACTS.

What was the first name of Cambridge?

It was called New Town.

When was New Town founded?

In December, 1630.

By whom was it settled?

By the Puritans.

Who were the Puritans?

A number of English Protestants who were dissatisfied with the Church of England, and who came to America to find religious freedom.

What was the original purpose of the town?

It was to be a fortified place, where the government officials might live in security.

From whom was the township purchased?

From the Mystic Indians.

What was paid for it?

The sum of about fifty dollars and an annual present of a coat to the squaw sachem while she lived.

Did many of the officials remove to New Town?

Though they agreed to do so, only a few built residences here.

What historical evidence have we of the importance of New Town at this time?

We know that the General Court met here from May, 1634, to May, 1636, and from April, 1637, to Sept., 1638.

Where was the original New Town situated?

It was situated between Harvard Square and the Charles River, from Holyoke Street on the East to Brattle Square on the West.

What was East Cambridge and Cambridgeport called at that time?

They were known as the "Neck," and were used principally for pastures and farms.

When and where was the first meeting house built in New Town?

In 1632, at the corner of Dunster and Mt. Auburn Streets.

Who was the first permanent minister?

The Rev. Thomas Hooker.

What caused him and a part of his congregation to leave in 1636?

They did not approve of the "religious test for voting."

What was meant by the "religious test for voting?"

It meant that only members of the Congregational Church were allowed to vote.

Where did the Rev. Mr. Hooker and his congregation go?

They settled at Hartford, Conn.

Who succeeded the Rev. Mr. Hooker at New Town?

The Rev. Thomas Shepard, who came from England in the year 1636.

What special event took place October 28, 1636?

The General Court ordered a college to be built, and promised the sum of two thousand dollars towards its erection.

When was it decided to build the college at New Town?

November 15, 1637.

Why was it called Harvard College?

As John Harvard, who lived in Charlestown, gave one-half of his estate (\$8,000.00) and his library towards the erection of the college, the General Court, in 1638, ordered it to be called Harvard College.

What new business was introduced into New Town in 1639?

Stephen Daye introduced the printing business.

When was the first permanent school built in New Town?

It was built in 1648 on the west side of Holyoke Street.

About this time what new territory was added to New Town?

Brighton, Newton, Arlington, Lexington, Bedford, and a part of Tewksbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, and Billerica.

In 1655 what parts were cut off from the town?

Bedford, Tewksbury, Carlisle, Chelmsford, and Billerica.

In 1688 what part was cut off?

Newton, which had been known as "Cambridge Village," became a separate town.

When did Lexington separate?

Lexington, known as "Cambridge Farms," became a separate town in 1713.

What was the population of Cambridge in 1750?

About 1,500.

Where were most of the people to be found?

About Harvard College, in Menotomy or Arlington, and in Little Cambridge or Brighton.

When did Arlington and Brighton become separate towns?

In 1807.

When was the original name New Town changed to Cambridge?

On May 2, 1638, the General Court ordered that "New Town shall henceforward be called Cambridge."

Why was it called Cambridge?

When New Town was selected as the seat of the college, the people naturally began to call it Cambridge, after Cambridge in England, where most of the Protestant ministers of the colony were educated.

Where was the new County Court House built in 1757?

In the lot where Lyceum Hall now stands.

What did the town of Cambridge have to say about the Stamp Act?

In 1765 the town voted that it was an infraction upon the rights of Englishmen living in the colonies.

After the Boston Port Bill was passed, how did Cambridge help Boston?

Cambridge ordered a collection to be taken up for the Boston sufferers.

How did the citizens of Cambridge regard the duty on tea?

They considered it a tax and were strongly opposed to it.

How did General Gage act toward the General Court?

He dissolved that body.

What was the effect of his action?

It caused the representatives of the General Court to organize as a Provincial Congress.

Where did the Provincial Congress meet?

It met first at Salem, then at Concord, and finally at Cambridge on Oct. 17, 1774.

What did the Congress do?

It appointed a Receiver-General of the province, to whom the collectors would pay the province taxes.

What was the route of the English troops on their way to Lexington and Concord?

Going and coming, they went through the town of Cambridge.

On that occasion how many lives were lost within the confines of Cambridge?

Twenty-six lives,—six of whom were citizens of Cambridge.

After the Battle of Lexington and Concord, where did the American army make its headquarters?

It encamped at Cambridge.

How long did the army remain in Cambridge?

About eleven months.

What happened on July 3, 1775?

Washington took command of the American army under what is now called the "Washington Elm."

Name one Cambridge officer who distinguished himself in the Battle of Lexington and Concord.

Captain Samuel Whittemore.

What Cambridge patriot sacrificed his life in the Battle of Bunker Hill?

Colonel Thomas Gardner.

What effect did the encampment of the American army have on Cambridge?

The town became a sort of fortified camp with several forts and a line of breast-works.

Mention two places where forts stood.

At the foot of Allston Street and where the Putnam School now stands.

When did the American army leave Cambridge?

After the British had evacuated Boston, March 17, 1776.

What was the population of Cambridge in 1776?

About 1,586.

What important convention met in Cambridge in 1779?

The convention that drew up the Constitution of Massachusetts.

In 1793, were there many dwellings in East Cambridge and Cambridgeport?

According to the Rev. Doctor Holmes there were only four dwelling houses east of Dana Street. The territory was made up of woodlands, pastures, and salt marsh along the banks of the Charles River.

What enterprises helped to develop East Cambridge and Cambridgeport?

The opening of the West Boston Bridge in 1793, the Craigie Bridge in 1809, and the Prison Point Bridge in 1815, the coming of the Glass Works in 1814, the erection of the County Buildings in 1816, and the building of St. John's Church on Fourth Street,—the oldest Catholic Church in the city.

After the population of East Cambridge and Cambridgeport had increased, what did Old Cambridge wish to do?

The citizens of Old Cambridge petitioned the Court for a separate township.

Was their request granted?

No; because the majority of the citizens of the town were opposed to it.

When did Cambridge become a city?

On March 17, 1846, the governor signed the legislative act; on March 30, it was ratified by the voters; and on May 4, the city government was inaugurated.

What was the population of Cambridge in 1846?

About 12,490.

Who was the first mayor of the city?

The Honorable James D. Green.

What was the condition of Cambridge at that time?

The streets were unpaved, uncurbed, unlighted, and unprotected from furious and reckless driving. Furthermore, there was scarcely any police protection.

What was one of the first acts of Mayor Green?

He organized the present police department.

Did Cambridge then have a fire department?

It had a Volunteer Fire Department.

When was this superseded by the present department?

In 1847.

In the beginning, where did Cambridge get its water supply?

From springs located at Spring Hill, Somerville.

Why was this supply discontinued?

Because it was not sufficient to supply the demand.

From what place did Cambridge get its water in 1865?

From Fresh Pond, Cambridge.

When was the Park Commission appointed?

In 1893, by Mayor Bancroft.

What was the purpose of this commission?

To beautify the city by laying out parks, driveways, and playgrounds.

What has Cambridge done to mark the historic spots of the city?

It has erected tablets with suitable inscriptions thereon.

What notable work did Cambridge perform in 1861?

It organized the first company of militia in the United States for the preservation of the Union.

Who organized this company?

Lawyer James P. Richardson of Cambridgeport.

What monument was erected in 1870?

A monument to the soldiers and the sailors of Cambridge who died in the service of their country during the Civil War.

Where does this monument stand?

In the Cambridge Common.

When was No-License introduced into the city?

In 1886.

Who was one of the most prominent advocates of No-License?

The Rev. Thomas Scully.

Has No-License helped the city?

It has helped it wonderfully.

What is the location of Cambridge?

It is in the eastern part of Massachusetts on the Charles River; it is in 42 degrees 20 minutes North Latitude, and 71 degrees 6 minutes West Longitude.

What are the boundaries of Cambridge?

It is bounded on the north by Somerville and Charlestown, on the south by the Charles River, which separates it from Brookline and Brighton, on the east by the Charles River, which separates it from Boston, and on the west by Watertown, Belmont, and Arlington.

What is the area of Cambridge?

Six and a half square miles.

How many acres of Park lands in the city?

About 328 acres.

How many miles of water frontage?

About five and a half miles.

How is Cambridge divided?

Into four principal districts: Cambridge, Cambridgeport, East Cambridge, and North Cambridge.

What is the population of the city?

About 110,000.

What makes Cambridge a great educational centre?

The presence of Harvard College, Radcliffe College, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a well-organized system of Kindergarten, Primary, Grammar, Trade, and High schools.

Mention a few of the famous men of our city.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Fiske, Asa Gray, Jean Louis Rudolphe Agassiz, and the generous-hearted Frederick H. Rindge, etc.

For what else is Cambridge noted?

For its many and large factories. It has about 340 factories, representing 195 industries.

What has helped to develop manufacturing in the city?

Its close proximity to the Atlantic seaboard, its admirable rail and water transportation facilities, and its easy access to Boston, the trade centre of New England.

Name some of the most important industries in Cambridge.

Printing and Publishing, Bookbinding, Bridge Works, Rubber Works, Sugar Refining, Marble Works, the manufacture of Bricks, Pottery, Furniture, Net and Twine, Organs and Pianos, Clothing, Soap, Telescopes, Confectioneries, Pumps, Reversible Collars, Boxes, Barrels, Carriages, Automobiles, Lamps, Machinery, Valves, Boilers, Woven Hose, Oil, Meat Products, etc.

How is the City of Cambridge governed?

By a Mayor, a Board of Aldermen, and a Common Council, as provided by the charter of 1891.

Name some of the other officials of the city.

City Clerk, City Treasurer, City Auditor, City Solicitor, City Physician, City Engineer, City Electrician, Park Commissioners, Commissioner of Public Safety, Superintendent of Streets, Superintendent of Public Buildings, Superintendent of Water Works, Superintendent of Schools, Overseers of the Poor, the Board of Health, Librarian, etc.

How are the Mayor and members of the Board of Aldermen elected?

By the men voters of the entire city.

How are the members of the Common Council elected?

By the men voters of the wards which they represent.

What is their term of office?

One year.

When does the fiscal year begin?

April 1.

How many wards in the city?

Eleven.

How many aldermen?

Eleven.

How many members in the Common Council?

Twenty-two—two for each ward.

How are the heads of the departments chosen?

They are nominated by the Mayor subject to the approval of the Board of Aldermen.

How are the schools of Cambridge governed?

By a School Board of five members, a superintendent and an assistant superintendent.

How are the members of the School Board elected?

Two members are elected by the voters of the entire city and three are elected by the voters of the three school districts into which the city is divided.

What is their term of office?

Three years.

By whom are they elected?

By the registered voters, both men and women.

Education in the Seventeenth Century.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, there was no education for women in England. Ladies highly born and bred, and naturally quick-witted, could scarcely write a line without solecisms and faults in spelling that would "shame a charity girl." "Our forefathers were wise," said Lady Clarendon, in 1685, "in not giving their daughters the education of writing. I should be very much ashamed," she added, "that I ever learned Latin, if I had not forgotten it." The wife of President John Adams, born in 1744, said that female education in her day, even in the best families, seldom went beyond writing and arithmetic, and that "it was fashionable to ridicule female learning."

Girls worked their way into the public schools as pupils, very much as women worked their way into the same schools as teachers. At first, the public school teachers were men exclusively. Towards the latter part of the last (eighteenth) century, the town histories of Massachusetts give us glimpses of women taking charge of schools here and there, in a sporadic way, at first during the summer months, and then all the year round. If women were to teach, it was meet that girls should study. Thus began the slowly rising tide of sentiment that women as well as men had minds to train and to use in a serious sense,—a tide that is obviously nearing its flood in Cambridge, since we have in our midst today—our fathers would have stood amazed at the prospect—women training boys and girls for college, and a college wherein women are trained to do it.—From a paper by Frank A. Hill, secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, 1896.

The Witchcraft Delusion in Cambridge.

There lived in Watertown a man by the name of Goodman Genings. He had a sick child and hired a woman for

nurse. The child died, and the nurse testified that a Mrs. Kendall, of this community, had bewitched the child. The only apparent reason for thinking so was that Mrs. Kendall had come to the house in which the child was sick, and petted and made much of it. That night, the little one died, and the nurse testified that Mrs. Kendall had bewitched the little one to death. The pious magistrates, seemingly without so much as inquiry into the character of the nurse or calling the parents of the dead child to corroborate her testimony, put Mrs. Kendall to death as a witch in the public square of our town. But afterwards, some true soul thought to inquire of the parents what they thought about the affair, when, behold, they affirmed that in their opinion the death of the child was not caused by anything Goody Kendall did, for they esteemed her a good woman and a good friend, but that the nurse had neglected her charge, and that the little one died in consequence. It afterward transpired that the nurse was but a disreputable creature, and she was cast into jail, where she died,—probably from privation.—From a sermon delivered by the Rev. Frank Oliver Hall, in the Third Universalist Church, Cambridge, May 31, 1896.

Literary Cambridge.

No town or city can ever be barren in the world of literature which has two such names as these (Longfellow and Lowell) on its roll of honor, and can hold within its bounds two such shrines as Craigie House and Elmwood. There is indeed a double wealth of association about Craigie House which so heaps up the memory of patriot and of poet as to make each contribute to the other's fame. During his lifetime, Longfellow made Cambridge, as Emerson made Concord, the port to which all craft put in that sailed over the seas of literature. His name is identified with the place, and the pages of his diary are set thick with the

names of men and women who lifted the knocker on his door. And now that he has gone, pilgrims continue their visit to the shrine.

Scarcely less fit is the homestead of Lowell, set in an aviary grove, withdrawn from too close contact with the world, yet with paths which led Lowell into those nooks of life from which he drew sure knowledge of men and nature.

. . . The attachment that Lowell bore to the town of his birth and best life finds expression in his verse and in that delightful paper on "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago."—Horace E. Scudder.

The Purpose of Harvard College.

In the course of its history, Harvard College has had three seals. The motto of the first of them was "Veritas," that of the second "In Christi Gloriam," that of the third "Christo et Ecclesia," and the latter is the seal that is in use today. A seal is a very sacred and solemn instrument.

. . . It is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual principle. To flourish a seal, to the pledge of which the user does not profess or propose to conform, is a species of dishonesty which it would be hard to excuse. Until Harvard College changes its seal, that seal and its predecessors bear witness to the ideas to which it is consecrated, and those ideas are rooted in the evangelical doctrines that centre around the Cross and are grounded in the doctrine of the Trinity and the related truths of the Incarnation and the Atonement. "The Truth," the "Glory of Christ," and "Christ and the Church," these are the basal rocks on which our great university, historically, theoretically, and professedly rests. Only as it is true to the functions set forth in these terms, is it true to the intentions of its founders.—From a sermon by the Rev. Edward Abbott, D.D., preached in St. James' Church, Cambridge, May 31, 1896.





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